

I want to express my thanks to the provider agencies, agency staff, resource coordinators, and DDA staff who assisted during the recent power outages and heat emergencies. Many providers enacted emergency plans to ensure the health and safety of the people that they support. Resource coordinators and DDA staff also visited and assisted people and providers affected by the severe weather and outages. Great job everyone!

The extreme heat is an ongoing concern for many people and families. Heat advisories are issued by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) as part of the Maryland Heat Emergency Plan when weather conditions, including excessive heat and/or humidity, have the potential to cause heat-related illness. The DHMH activates the Plan any time the forecast shows a high chance of the heat index reaching the trigger point of 105 degrees. I urge you to take extreme caution and to consult the DHMH Web site, [Extreme Heat](#). The site offers helpful tips including coping with the heat and prevention and treatment of heat related illness. For information and locations of cooling centers visit [www.maryland.gov](http://www.maryland.gov). Most of all use common sense. Stay out of the sun, drink plenty of fluids and avoid strenuous activity.

If you or your family has not yet developed an emergency plan, the DDA website, [Emergency preparedness links](#) provides a listing of resources and an emergency checklist that can help you begin to make a plan.

On a more positive note, the DDA and Medicaid have been meeting with stakeholders to discuss the Department's development of new Medicaid Supports Waivers for people with developmental disabilities. The Department believes that input on the proposed waivers from people on the DDA waiting list and their families/caregivers, advocates and other stakeholders is crucial. I hope that you will provide your input either by attending one of the public meetings, the conference call or the online survey. For dates and additional information on how to participate, please click the following link - [Wavier input](#)

I am pleased to report that more than 260 people in the crisis resolution category received services in fiscal year 2012 as a result of the Alcohol Tax revenue provided to DDA. Additionally, all people on the crisis prevention category were offered Services of Short Duration. The DDA will release the final number of people served through the Alcohol Tax funds in the coming weeks.

The new fiscal year brings new Low Intensity Support Service (LISS) funding. Please remember that LISS agencies are currently accepting requests and that the funds are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council is undertaking a review of LISS in collaboration with the DDA. The Council has contracted with the Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities to conduct a study, including this survey, to gather input from an array of stakeholders throughout Maryland. To complete this brief survey, please click on <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LISSMaryland>

Thank you to everyone that has written or called to share your concerns, thoughts, ideas, and experiences with me. Please continue to share your concerns, thoughts, ideas, and experiences with

me by contacting my special assistant, Kim Bennardi, at 410-767-5997, or by sending an e-mail to [dda\\_executive\\_unit@dhmh.state.md.us](mailto:dda_executive_unit@dhmh.state.md.us)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Frank Kirkland', with a stylized, flowing script.

Frank Kirkland

Executive Director